

APPLICANT(S): Heilper et al.
SERIAL NO.: 10/813,459
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AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

SW
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Please replace paragraph [0004] with the following rewritten paragraph:

[0004] Every year, the retail industry loses money to the production of counterfeit designer products. Counterfeit items are often very hard to reveal, as they are copied so well it is often difficult to tell the difference between the copy and an original. Many tools and techniques have been proposed to protect against counterfeiting, including difficult to copy labels and hidden signs on the actual product. These techniques have not been extremely successfully, however, because counterfeiters are extremely skillful in copying even difficult labels, and hidden signs in the product are hidden so well that they become inaccessible.

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Please replace paragraph [0013] with the following rewritten paragraph:

[0013] The following discussion will describe the present invention using a bar code encoding process. However, it will be appreciated that UAN 18 may be encoded using many different types of encoding processes, such as the following non-limiting examples: a one dimensional bar code, a two-dimensional bar code, an RFID tag to be read with an RFID reader or a magnetic stripe. A magnetic stripe may be readable by current credit card readers. Alternatively, UAN 18 may be printed as a number, with no encoding. The latter may be readable using optical character recognition (OCR) technology.

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Please replace paragraph [0021] with the following rewritten paragraph:

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[0021] At the time of purchase, code reader 40C attached to retailer 24 may read bar code 38E on the label of item 16. When a customer 26 wishes to purchase an item, say item 16E, customer 26 may scan bar code 38E on item 16E with bar code reader 40C, a portion of POS unit 42. POS unit 42 may send a query 30 to authority 10 requesting a verification of whether or not item 16E is original, and available for sale by retailer 24. Authority 10 may then check its records, according to the flow of data it has received. If the records so indicate, authority 10 may then send (step 32) a verification to POS 42, verifying that item 16 is a non-counterfeit original, and is available for sale by retailer 24.